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ABSTRACT

Extending over a 14-week period, this study examined the effects of a program designed to enhance the self-esteem of at-risk students by developing an internal locus of control in the students. The program consisted of six major components: (1) a specified vocabulary and format; (2) goal identification and description by students; (3) student evaluation and selection of alternative actions to accomplish goals; (4) student journal writing showing reflective evaluation and identification of successful and unsuccessful behaviors; (5) a scale to evaluate student goals; and (6) peer encouragement through class meetings. The target group consisted of 72 9- to 12-year-old students in two 4th grade and two 5th grade classes. The Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale was administered as a pretest and posttest, providing the data from which the discrepancy gap for showing improvement in self-esteem was formulated. In addition, serious behavior referrals for the first and second semesters were compared. Results indicated that students' self-esteem improved and fewer severe behavior referrals were necessary. However, attendance was not significantly affected. Related materials are appended. (MM)

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USING GOAL SETTING TO ENHANCE SELF ESTEEM AND CREATE AN INTERNAL LOCUS OF CONTROL IN THE AT RISK ELEMENTARY STUDENT

by

Sharon S. Sisco

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A Practicum Report

Submitted to the Faculty of the Center for the Advancement of Education of Nova University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science.

The abstract of this report may be placed in a National Database System for reference.

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ABSTRACT

Using Goal Setting to Enhance Self Esteem and Create an Internal Locus of Control in the At Risk Elementary Student
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The Center for the Advancement of Education.
Descriptors: At Risk/Elementary Education/Self Esteem/Behavior Modification/Self Control/ Self Actualization/Self Concept/Academic Failure/ Critical Thinking/Dropout Prevention/Locus of Control/

Low self-esteem and a history of social and academic failure characterized the at risk student population of fourth and fifth graders. The problem was addressed by the implementation of a goal setting/response journal program which emphasized critical thinking and problem solving strategies. A standardized self concept inventory was administered as a pre and posttest. Baseline data was collected on attendance and severe behavior referrals for comparative purposes.

The results indicated improved self-esteem and fewer severe behavior referrals. Attendance was not affected significantly. It was concluded that the practice of goal setting and reflective journal writing can provide a vehicle to facilitate and increase the internal locus of control of the at risk student with the result being enhanced self-esteem. Appendices include a goal setting/journal response format, student award facsimiles, and a peer facilitator checklist.

Authorship Statement/Document release

Authorship Statement

I hereby testify that this paper and the work it reports are entirely my own. Where it has been necessary to draw from the work of others, published or unpublished, I have acknowledged such work in accordance with accepted scholarly and editorial practice. I give this testimony freely, out of respect for the scholarship of other workers in the field and in the hope that my work, presented here, will earn similar respect.

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CHAPTER I

Purpose

The practicum site was an elementary alternative education school, composed of grades four and five only, located in the southeastern region of the United States near a large metropolitan area. The major industry of the surrounding area is tourism.

The school district is the fifth largest in the state. There are 75 elementary schools, 21 middle schools, 15 high schools, five exceptional education centers, two Intensive Behavior Improvement Schools, and two Challenge schools.

The student population at the implementation site is made up of at risk students who meet a minimum of one of the following specific criteria: homeless, retained one or more times, an inconsistent attendance pattern, multiple school entries and withdrawals, evidence of low self-esteem, a significant disparity between ability predictors and achievement, stressful family situations (including drug and or alcohol abuse.)

Forty-six percent of the students currently enrolled have been retained one or more times. The enrollment is at capacity; 180 students. This inner-city school pulls its enrollment from 42 zoned elementary schools. As a result, 98 percent of the students are transported by bus, with some routes requiring 50-55 minutes to transport. Although the enrollment eligibility zone is large and encompasses a diverse socioeconomic (SES) population, more than 75 percent of the students have a low SES profile based on parent income, housing data, and the fact that 61 percent of the students qualify for free lunch or reduced lunch.

There are 18 students in each of 10 classes with a teacher and part-time aide. The students are grouped heterogeneously. The minority ratio is 27 percent and within the parameters set by the governing board of education.

The school staff is made up of one Principal, 10 academic teachers, one Physical Education teacher, one Art/Music teacher, one half-time Reading Specialist, five classroom assistants, a computer science para-professional,

and a Student Services Team consisting of one guidance counselor, one school psychologist and one social worker. The support staff consists of one school secretary, one data prep clerk, one media assistant, two cafeteria workers, two custodians, one itinerant speech teacher.

The average teaching experience of the teaching staff is nine years.

This researcher has 12 years experience and is currently teaching a four/five self-contained classroom designated as an Upgrade class. The Upgrade class is designed to diagnose and remediate students who are two academic years behind the students' peer age group. Currently the class of 18 has four upgraded students.

The writer's additional responsibilities include: Team Leader, Parent-Teacher Association Treasurer, program design committee member, referral evaluation team, curriculum materials selection committee member, peer teacher, and School Advisory Committee alternate.

One of the criteria for student acceptance

into this alternative education setting is evidence of low self-esteem. Low self-esteem is manifested in poor academic progress as a result of absences and/or failure to complete assignments, low test scores, poor social skills (including name-calling, verbal and physical aggression, and refusal to participate in group activities), lack of eye contact, inadequate personal hygiene and/or depressive body language such as slouching, and heads on desks. Individual students in the program may exhibit one or more of the indicators for low self-esteem.

Problem Statement

The elementary alternative education program was designed to meet the special needs of a specific population; the student identified as being at risk of leaving school prior to earning a high school diploma. The purpose of the alternative education program is to identify individual needs and provide a program that will result in a successful school experience through the use of diagnostic and motivational strategies

designed to remediate inadequate academic and social skills.

A successful school experience is the result of many successful experiences. These experiences vary in nature. Some of these successful experiences will be academic, while others will be rewarding social experiences. These experiences are interrelated, building one success upon another. This structure of success then becomes self-fulfilling and encouraging, cycling and recycling through the school years.

Without a cycle of successful experiences, a student has no basis for predicting success, degree of risk increases, and the comfort level is reduced. Students who have no success structure, or a very weak one at best, will not trust themselves enough to risk. These students avoid failure by avoiding risk. These students avoid school.

In the elementary alternative education setting, implementing strategies that provide opportunities for success and which encourage the student to take risks socially and academically is

the primary task of the classroom teacher. Careful consideration is given to writing curriculum, selecting teaching materials and implementing teaching strategies.

Low self-esteem, resulting from and contributing to failure to succeed, is a problem among students in the target group at the practicum site. This problem is manifested in two documented ways: attendance and behavior.

The average absentee rate for each student per semester for each of the 4 target classes at the elementary alternative education site is illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1

Average Absentee Rate Per Student
Semester 1

Target Class	Average Days Absent
Class A	5.94
Class B	7.72
Class C	9.38
Class D	3.33

The first semester serious behavior referrals for each of the targeted classes at the site are illustrated in Table 2.

Table 2

Serious Behavior Referrals
Semester 1

Target Class	Number of Referrals
Class A	8
Class B	9
Class C	14
Class D	13

As discussed in Chapter 1, behavioral indicators of low self-esteem are manifested in both the academic and social performance of the student. Johnson and Johnson (1985) called social skills the 'keystone' of stable family and peer relationships, and emphasized the necessity of positive social skills for a successful career.

Currently, there exists a problem at the elementary alternative education site. The students have no defined process for identifying

the behaviors that lead to success. The students have no concrete strategy to evaluate or measure personal successes. According to Berliner (1990), children need to learn that problems can be solved and that different alternatives need to be weighed before deciding on a solution. Students who are provided with a process of problem solving will learn that the solutions will vary with the situation.

There was a need to develop and implement a structured goal setting program which involved critical thinking to problem solve and increase self-awareness. This program would assist students in identifying specific behaviors that when practiced lead to success. The program should include a method by which students will evaluate the measure of their success. The implementation of this program should reduce the number of severe behavior referrals, reduce the number of student absences and provide observable evidence of positive self-esteeem.

This author designed and implemented a program designed to assist the students in

identifying specific, observable behaviors that when practiced lead to successful experiences. The design included a success ladder which the student used to evaluate the success of the practiced behaviors.

The Piers-Harris Childrens Self-Concept Scale administered as a pretest and posttest provided the data from which the discrepancy gap for showing improvement in self-esteem was formulated. In addition, a comparison was made between the serious behavior referrals for Semester 1 and Semester 2.

The target group of 72 students was a heterogeneous group of nine to twelve year old students in four self-contained classrooms. Classes A and C are classified as fourth grade classrooms and classes B and D are classified as fifth grade classrooms.

Outcome Objectives

At the end of 12 weeks of implementation the target classes will show a 25 percent reduction in the total number of serious behavior referrals as

measured by the comparison of Semester 1 and Semester 2 serious behavioral referrals.

At the end of 12 weeks of implementation 50 percent of the target group will show a significent improvement in self concept as measured by the comparison of scores on the Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale administered as a pretest and posttest.

At the end of 12 weeks of implementation the target group will use critical thinking strategies to write individual action plans which identify specific, observable behaviors necessary for achieving individual behavioral and/or academic success as measured by teacher observation of the daily goals journals.

At the end of 12 weeks of implementation there will be a reduction of 18 percent in the average absentee rate for each student in the four target classes as measured by the daily absentee roles.

CHAPTER II

Research and Solution Strategy

In an address to the nation, 'America 2000: An Education Strategy,' President Bush called for sweeping and fundamental changes to be made in the nation's educational system. In order to educate students to think for and about themselves in preparation for understanding and accepting responsible citizenship roles and achieving their full potential we must

> ...devise challenging and inspiring strategies to serve the needs of a diverse body of students. This is especially important for students who are at risk of academic failure --for the failure of these students wll become the failure of our nation. The...daily work (of educators) must now be dedicated to creating a new educational order in which success for all students is the first priority (America 2000, 1991;59-60)

Student success must be planned. Teachers must employ specific teaching strategies which act as a framework for students to construct successful experiences that are a result of specific behavioral actions. In a discussion of

the Links-to-Success model Alderman (1990) referred to the research on motivational attributes that students use to explain success of failure. Low achieving students often have the perception of 'helplessness'. It is felt that there is nothing that can be done to prevent failure or insure success. These students operate with a weak internal locus of control, operating as Alderman describes it, with internal/stable attribution. The stable attribute describes the pattern of failure.

Alderman stressed the importance of identifying and attributing, correctly and specifically, the reasons for success or failure. Alderman goes on to emphasize that students should define the skills and abilities that result in successful experiences. This practice creates an awareness whereby the student begins to recognize the feel of success and realize that positive self-esteem is not dependent on other people.

As student autonomy increases, self-esteem increases and a pattern of success begins to

emerge. Behaviors that are satisfying and felt to be successful will generally be repeated (Downes, 1992). Students lacking feelings of success and self-esteem most often remain poorly motivated both academically and behaviorally. Hill (1991:310) wrote, in a personal reflection on being an at risk learner, that "success and learning cross-fertilize one another." The at risk student needs to be shown how to strategize and plan for behaviors which will lead to success.

> Classroom studies document the fact that disadvantaged students receive less instruction in higher-order skills than do their more advantaged peers (Means,1991).

Historically, critical thinking strategies, if taught in the classroom, were focused on increasing the students' academic achievement.

Kohn (1991:505) proposed an approach to classroom management that "places the emphasis on developing intrinsic motives to participate productively and prosocially." The goal of this metacognitive approach to problem solving and behavior management is that students will become responsible for what they do and what kind of people they become. The teacher's role is that of

facilitator and encourager. Kohn theorized that the students' problem solving abilities are strengthened through the practice of perspective taking. Children involved in planning and decision making develop a framework for prosocial behavior and problem solving..."and not so incidentally, thinking, as well." (Kohn,1991:504)

Most classroom management programs put the onus for behavior management (control) squarely on the teacher. In the widely used model, Assertive Discipline (Canter,1976), the teacher is responsible for establishing and enforcing the classroom rules through an involved series of tasks which include: specifying explicit directions for expected behaviors, constructing a hierarchical list of disciplinary consequences , creating a myriad of positive reinforcements, and employing a record keeping system for tracking daily warnings and their consequences for each student. Additionally, the teachers are reminded that the students should not like the consequences and that if necessary, tougher consequences should be implemented. Curwin (1989:83) denounced

Canter's model as being a "power-base obedience model" with one person (the teacher) wielding all the power. Curwin pointed out that

> there is no systematic means by which the students are allowed any input into the process. Nowhere are they viewed as capable criticle thinkers or decision makers.

Some behavior management techniques that are currently being employed in schools today include the use of alternate behavior rooms (time-out), referral to the administration for severe discipline infractions, and in or out of school suspension. All of these alternatives have a common attribute: they shift the responsibility for the situation from the student to another individual. The locus of control remains external. The student is denied ownership of the solution to the problem. According to Kohn (1991:501)

> A student manipulated by currently fashionable behavioral techniques is unlikely to <u>internalize</u> the values underlying the desired behaviors.

This writer conducted a broad review of educational literature for the purpose of establishing a basis for constructing a

personal behavior management model. The framework for the design was Thomas R. McDaniel's (1989:81-82) principles of an effective discipline program:

1. It should be philosophically sound;
   --based on clear concepts and consistent with the school's educational philosophy.
2. It should be pedagogically appropriate;
   --theories, principles, and practices should lead to positive attitudes about human relationships.
3. It should be pragmatically feasible;and
   --training, materials and consultants are affordable.
4. It should be professionally evaluated;
   --research and anectdotal reports should be gathered for documentation.

The design incorporates the following tactics to assist in transferring the locus of control for student behavior to the student (Wargo,1991:20):

1. Critical thinking skills
2. Problem solving/shared decision making
3. Self-awareness, self-esteem
4. Planning, goal setting
5. Learn to learn skills

The format for the design was found in the metacognition model for learning awareness (Wade, 1989):

1. Task awareness (problem identification)
2. Strategy awareness (weighing/selecting alternatives)
3. Performance awareness (reflection and evaluation)

The staff at the practicum site had given many hours to investigating strategies and research which addressed the academic and social needs of the at risk student population. It was the desire of the administration and staff to implement a behavior management program that would instill in the students a sense of hope and self-esteem. Models incorporating punishment and/or 'win-lose' situations would not be appropriate for use at this center. The adopted behavior management system needed to be congruent with the the encouragement training that the staff had received. The model was designed to support the philosophy of ecouragement, which is to convey to the student that the student has the capabilities for positive behavior and prosocial activities.

The site administrator was supportive and the teaching staff was very receptive to the proposed practicum implementation.

The 'I'M IN CHARGE OF ME!' personal management system is composed of 6 major components:

1. a specified vocabulary and format;
2. goal identification and writing;
3. critical evaluation and selection of alternative actions to accomplish goals;
4. journal writing showing reflective evaluation and identification of successful and unsuccessful behaviors;
5. a success scale;and
6. peer encouragement through class meetings.

This design is intended to assist the students in identifying what behaviors lead to successful experiences academically and socially. This knowledge gives the students a sense of empowerment leading to the feeling of being 'in charge'.

In an article on empowering children through the employment of critical thinking and values clarification Wassermann (1991) refers to Louis E. Raths' educational theories. Wassermann's suggestion for incorporating these empowerment

tools into a curriculum lends support to this researcher's proposal. Wassermann reported (1991:237), "As students make choices, they are strengthened emotionally and cognitively...they are empowered. Their autonomy is increased."

It was hoped that this sense of empowerment would result in fewer student absences and reduce the number of serious behavioral referrals at the site.

CHAPTER III

Method

The "I'M IN CHARGE OF ME!' goal setting and response journal program is a personal management system designed to enhance the self-esteem of students by developing an internal locus of control. The desired outcomes, as a result of these activities, were: a decrease in the number of serious behavior referrals and a decrease in the number of student absences.

The research project extended over a period of 14 weeks. The first week pre-implementation activities included:

1. overviewing proposal and implementation procedures with the site administrator;
2. meeting with the school counselor and the school psychologist to discuss procedures for admistering the standardized self-concept inventory as a pretest;
3. preparing and distributing the program materials packets to the implementing classroom teachers; and
4. providing orientation and training session for implementing teachers.

During the teacher orientation and training session the researcher reviewed the program

implementation manual thoroughly and provided a simulation activity where the teachers, acting as students, used the goal setting/journal response format to write personal goals. Emphasis was placed on the importance of using specific language when writing goals. It was stressed that the goals should be observable, realistic and attainable. The implementing teachers then practiced writing situational daily journal responses documenting the behavioral steps that did or did not lead to success. Teachers were reminded that the success scale number that was assigned each day was to merely reflect the overall effort involved in practicing goal oriented behaviors.

The following is a description of each week's implementing activities:

Week 1: School psychologist administered the pretest, and classroom teachers introduced the concept of goal setting.

Week 2: Students began writing goals and action plans using specific behavioral terms. The teacher began individual strategy conferences.

Week 3: The students practiced writing

language-specific journal responses documenting success strategies. The students practiced identifying successful behaviors.

Week 4: Students began to write individual goals and action plans for success. The students assigned a success scale value to the day's effort and the teachers monitored the student journals for specific language use and evidence of behavior identification. Also, during this week the students and teacher participated in a class meeting to recognize and encourage successes.

Week 5-6: The previous week's activities continued. The students were encouraged to write specific I Care About You (ICU) messages to other students as a means of recognizing and encouraging successes.

Week7-12: Students who had set goals and maintained success received I'M IN CHARGE OF ME! buttons and certificates of achievement.

Week 13: A posttest was administered and videotaped interviews were made. Students were identified who would speak to the Parent Teacher Association about the goal setting program.

RESOURCES

In addition to the implementing classroom teachers, four teacher assistants, the student services team, art/music teacher, and physical education teacher were provided with a program

overview. These individuals volunteered to provide supplemental encouragement, feedback, support and focus for the target students involved in the goal setting program. Parents of the students involved in the practicum implementation were notified of the program goals via the permission letter and subsequent parent-teacher conferences.

As the implementation process progressed four additional classroom teachers requested the materials to incorporate the goal setting program in their classrooms.

MONITORING

A variety of monitoring methods were employed throughout the project implementation. The classroom teachers who were implementing the practicum project were directed to monitor the student response journals daily. Close monitoring was important to ensure that the students were using specific behavioral terms in their written goals and responses. An equally important aspect of this monitoring was to determine if the

students' journal responses reflected the critical thinking process.

The implementing teachers and this writer met weekly to review the implementation process, share concerns and encouragement, and review procedures. Much of the discussion revolved around the information gained from the teachers' daily monitoring of the student journals. Teachers were reminded to model orally the critical thinking processes that the students should use in composing their journal responses.

Following the six week team meeting the following mid-course adjustments were made:

1. The writer developed a checklist to be used by peer facilitators as they worked with other students.

2. Peer facilitators were trained and became available upon request.

3. The writer's students (previously experienced goal setters) began a three week teaming with class A at the request of the implementing teacher. Both classes met on Mondays to assist the target students in analyzing behavioral needs, writing specific goals, and action plans to accomplish those goals.

EVALUATION

A standardized self-concept inventory was administered as a pretest to establish baseline data with which the posttest results were compared to determine whether the outcome objective had been met

The practicum site data prep clerk provided data from the first semester attendance records and the first semester serious behavior referral records. The researcher then used the data to establish a baseline for comparison with the second semester statistics.

Videotaped segments were made of the beginning implementation procedures in two classrooms. Later, the videotape was used to document a peer facilitator session where a student who had demonstrated good practice in goal setting procedures assisted another student who was experiencing difficulty writing a Success Plan. A final video segment was taped following the conclusion of the implementation period. This segment is composed of individual student interviews with the researcher. The purpose of

these interviews was to examine student attitudes toward the goal setting program and document areas of individual success.

CHAPTER IV

Results

Outcome Objective 1

At the end of 12 weeks of implementation the target classes showed a 23 percent reduction in the total number of severe behavior referrals as measured by the comparison of Semester 1 and Semester 2 severe behavioral referrals. Although the objective was not met, the reduction was viewed as a significant improvement.

Results

As illustrated in Table 3 the number of severe behavior referrals decreased from 44 in Semester 1 to 34 referrals written in Semester 2.

Table 3

Comparison of Severe Behavior Referrals by Semester

Target Class	Semester 1	Semester 2	% of change
Class A	8	14	+ 75%
Class B	9	7	- 22%
Class C	14	6	- 57%
Class D	13	7	- 46%

While classes B, C and D showed a decrease in the number of severe behavioral referrals written, it is important to note that eight of the 14 referrals attributed to Class A in the second semester were issued to only two students.

As shown in Table 4, there was a decrease in the actual number of students receiving severe behavior referrals during the second semester.

Table 4

Students Receiving
Serious Behavior Referrals by Class

Target Class (n=18)	Semester 1	Semester 2
Class A	7 (39%)	6 (33%)
Class B	6 (33%)	4 (22%)
Class C	7 (39%)	5 (28%)
Class D	8 (44%)	4 (25%)

Outcome Objective 2

At the end of 12 weeks of implementation 33 percent of the target group showed a significant improvement in self concept as measured by the comparison of scores on the Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale administered as a

pretest and postest, therefore the objective was not met.

Although the objective of 50 percent improvement in self-concept was not met, it is encouraging to note that all classes showed an increase in self concept (see Table 6).

Results

The Piers-Harris inventory provided T-scores with a mean of 50 and a standard deviation of 10 for use in comparing scores. Table 5 provides descript ors for interpretation of the scores.

Table 5

T-Score Ranges and Descriptors

Total T-Scores	Descriptors
56-70+	Above Average
45-55	Average
-30-44	Below Average

The students' raw scores were converted to T-scores for both pre and post tests. Following posttesting the individual student T-scores were

compared and students who moved from one T-score range to a higher T-score range were identified as showing an enhanced self concept. Table 6 reflects those findings.

Table 6

Percentage of Students Completeting Pre and Post Tests Whose T-Score Ranges Improved

Target Class (n = Total)	Percentage	n = students
Class A (n=16)	38%	n=6
Class B (n=13)	46%	n=6
Class C (n=16)	25%	n=4
Class D (n=16)	25%	n=4

The following two tables graphically interpret the findings for the entire target population.

Table 7

Students In Each T-score Range

Entire Sample (n=61)	Pre	Post
Above Average	22	31
Average	27	23
Below Average	12	7

Table 8

Percentage of Entire Student Sample
Who Moved From One Range To
A Higher Range

Total Sample	%	Students Who Moved To A Higher Range	%
n=61	100%	n=20	33%

Outcome Objective 3

At the end of 12 weeks of implementation the target group used critical thinking strategies to write individual Action Plans which identified specific, observable behaviors necessary for achieving individual behavioral and/or academic success as measured by teacher observation of the daily goals journal. Therefore the objective was met.

Results

Several aspects of this objective presented a challenge to the implementing team. Generally, at risk students demonstrate a number of task avoidance behaviors particularly when presented with a task involving writing. The classroom

teachers used the first three weeks to set the climate for the project. Emphasis was placed on teacher modeling of the critical thinking and writing processes. In addition, the teachers used class meetings to present the concepts of empowerment, choice and independence, and the relationship of these concepts to the goal setting process and the desired outcomes. The students were led to see the goal setting process as an opportunity for increased personal power and control.

The implementing teachers monitored the goal writing and the response journal writing carefully. Reluctant students were either paired with a student demonstrating success, conferenced individually by the classroom teacher or referred to a peer facilitator.

Outcome Objective 4

At the end of 12 weeks of implementation there was no reduction in the average absentee rate for each student in the four target classes as measured by the daily attendance role. The objective was not met.

Results

As demonstrated in Table 9, none of the classrooms showed a decrease in average days absent per student. However, there were several variables that heavily influenced the results of this study.

Approximately 3 weeks into the practicum implementation an influenza strain caused a increase in absences for both students and staff. The practicum site recorded three days with the highest rate of absence in its two year existence.

The average absentee rate per student was calculated by dividing each class's total number of absences for the semester by the total student population. As indicated in Table 9, there was an increase in the total number of days absent. Due to the small student population in each class (ranging from 16-18), one or two students with a substantial increase in days absent could significantly affect the student average in a negative manner.

This writer found upon examining the attendance data that students had shown an increase in days absent ranging from 0 percent to 1900 percent.

It appears, in retrospect, that comparing average student attendance for a small student population would not be the appropriate method to determine if student attendance had improved.

Table 9

Average Absentee Rate Per Student

Target Class	Semester 1	Semester 2
Class A	5.94	6.88
Class B	7.72	7.77
Class C	9.38	10.50
Class D	3.33	3.83

In an effort to determine whether there was any improvement in actual student attendance, the writer examined the attendance data for Semester 1 and Semester 2. When comparing actual days absent for each student it was determined that in three out of four classrooms the majority of the students did not show an increase in days absent.

These findings are illustrated in the following table.

Table 10

Students Who Did Not Show An Increase In Days Absent

Target Class (n = Total)	No Increase (n = students)	%
Class A (n=18)	12	67%
Class B (n=17)	11	65%
Class C (n=17)	8	47%
Class D (n=16)	10	63%

While objectives 1 through 4 were documented through teacher observation, this researcher felt there was a need to document the positive changes that were being observed in students. The observable indicators for positive changes were: increased eye contact, smiling, improved social skills, better grades, improved body language and positive verbal statements. A videotape segment of student interviews was made in an effort to document some of these indicators.

CHAPTER V

Recommendations

Although not all of the objectives were met, the implementing teachers, the Student Services team, and the administration made the following observations:

1. significant signs of improved self-esteem;
2. a majority of the target students showed signs of increased risk-taking with regard to academics, and social interactions;
3. students were observed identifying what behaviors would lead to success when practiced;
4. students displayed increased self-confidence; and
5. student grades improved.

The results of this project were shared with the faculty and assisting staff members of the practicum site.

The administration has recommended that the I'M IN CHARGE OF ME! program be adopted on a school-wide basis for the 1992-93 school year.

The Student Services team has rewritten the social skills curriculum to include the I'M IN CHARGE OF ME! program.

The results of this practicum, as well as a copy of the report, will be conveyed to the supervisors of the alternative education department for consideration as a program component for all alternative education classes.

Finally, this researcher plans to submit the I'M IN CHARGE OF ME! program to the district Teacher Education Center for consideration as a staff development component to be taught countywide.

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Appendices

Appendix A

County Permission Form

January 8, 1992

To Whom It May Concern,

Sharon S. Sisco has received the necessary approvals to conduct a practicum with the students at this educational facility.

Mrs. Sisco and I have discussed her practicum proposal on numerous occasions and I am very anxious for the implementation to begin.

Dr. Allen Mortimer, Department of Educational Accountability has given the necessary district approval for the proposal to be implemented.

Sincerely,

David C. Schmitt

David C. Schmitt
Principal

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Appendix B

Parent Permission Form

Dear Parents,

I am a 5th grade teacher at your child's school. I am in the process of fulfilling the requirements for my master's degree at NOVA University. A portion of my study requires that I develop and implement a program for improvement at my school. My proposal is a goal setting and journal writing program designed to assist your child in feeling better about him/herself and to help your child learn some problem solving steps.

Documentation for my study will come from test scores, and this year's attendance and referral records. This information will be included in my report. All participants will remain anonymous. No names will be used, nor will the school be identified.

I would appreciate your permission to use this information in my study.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Sharon S. Sisco

Sharon S. Sisco

****

Please check one. Return this form to your child's teacher. Thank you.

_____ YES, I give my permission

_____ NO, I do not give my permission

_____ _____

Parent/Guardian Signature Date

Appendix C

Goals Journal Action Plan

GOAL 1- _____

ACTION PLAN 1. _____

2. _____

GOAL 2- _____

ACTION PLAN 1. _____

2. _____

WEEK OF: ___/___/___

WRITE ABOUT YOUR PROGRESS. WHAT WAS SUCCESSFUL? WHAT WASN'T?

	5 4 3 2 1		MONDAY	5 4 3 2 1
	5 4 3 2 1		TUESDAY	5 4 3 2 1
	5 4 3 2 1		WEDNESDAY	5 4 3 2 1
	5 4 3 2 1		THURSDAY	5 4 3 2 1
	5 4 3 2		FRIDA	5 4 3 2 1

Appendix D

Goals Award Certificate

I'M IN CHARGE OF ME !

_____

The above named person has practiced
SUCCESSFUL goal setting and Action Planning,
and knows how to plan for SUCCESS!

_____ TEACHER

_____ PRINCIPAL

_____

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